Completing the Puzzle with Research

FSU FACULTY WORK SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH STUDENTS ON INNOVATIVE AND EXCITING RESEARCH
Collaborative Research

People who are new to Framingham State University are always surprised to learn about both the quantity and sophistication of faculty-led research taking place on our campus. What I think is even more uncommon and exciting is the degree to which our undergraduate students get the opportunity to work side-by-side with our professors on this work.

In this issue of Framingham State Magazine, you’ll get a chance to learn about a variety of interesting research projects happening right now at FSU, as well as the crucial role our students play in these initiatives.

FSU faculty take pride in being dedicated teacher-scholars, unlike at many large or private institutions where research is the primary pursuit of many members of the faculty and teaching is a secondary endeavor. Our faculty perform research not only to benefit society and broaden knowledge in their fields, but also to facilitate the educational and career growth of our students.

I hope you enjoy this issue and welcome your feedback.
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DISCLAIMER
All photos featured in Framingham State Magazine were taken either prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 or in a very safe and controlled environment that included social distancing among all individuals and face coverings on anyone not in the frame. FSU adheres to the strictest COVID-19 safety guidelines.
Framingham State University Senior Sashell Thebaud Honored by Gov. Baker as One of ‘29 Who Shine’

Framingham State University senior Sashell Thebaud of Stoughton, MA, was among the 29 students from the Massachusetts Public Higher Education system honored by Governor Charlie Baker during a virtual ceremony on Thursday, May 13.

Thebaud is originally from Haiti and came to the United States with her mother in 2011 following the devastating earthquake that occurred there in 2010. She is trilingual, with fluency in English, French and Haitian Creole. A Psychology major, Thebaud is an outstanding student and a member of the Psi Chi International Honor Society.

“He is an outstanding student and an even better person. We couldn’t be more proud of her.”

— President F. Javier Cevallos

At FSU, Thebaud served three years as an Orientation Leader, performed volunteer service work through the Alternative Spring Break Program in 2018 and 2019, and studied abroad in spring 2020 at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England.

Thebaud has applied to enter Framingham State University’s Master of Human Resources program. A self-described “people person,” she is interested in a career in Human Resources where she can help others achieve their potential.

FSU Receives $62K+ Grant for Multi-Day Racial Equity Policy Review Institute

Framingham State University was awarded a $62,250 grant from the Massachusetts Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) to coordinate a multi-day Racial Equity Policy Review Institute for up to 150 leaders within the campus community.

Participants in the institute, which took place over the summer, gained a better understanding of systemic racism in higher education and how it manifests on campus; learned how to define what a racist policy is and how it shows up in student outcomes; and created an initial yearlong plan to undertake policy review.

“We are very grateful to the Baker administration for awarding us funding to coordinate this institute,” says Framingham State President F. Javier Cevallos. “We are never going to be able to close racial opportunity gaps until we address policies that limit the self-determination of students of color.”

The two-day institute included leaders from across the FSU campus.

Framingham State Student McKenzie Ward ’23 Honored as Newman Civic Fellow

Campus Compact, a Boston-based nonprofit organization working to advance the public purposes of higher education, announced earlier this year the 290 students who will make up the organization’s 2021–2022 cohort of Newman Civic Fellows. McKenzie Ward, a sophomore at Framingham State University, will join 289 students from 39 states, Washington, D.C. and Mexico to form the 2021–2022 cohort.

The Newman Civic Fellowship is a yearlong program for students from Campus Compact member institutions. The students selected for the fellowship are leaders on their campuses who demonstrate a commitment to finding solutions for challenges facing communities locally, nationally and internationally.

McKenzie Ward ’23 joins 289 other students from across the country as a 2021–2022 Newman Civic Fellow.
FSU Announces Third Pair of Mancuso Scholarship Recipients

Two Massachusetts high school graduates and their families are breathing easier after receiving the Framingham State University Mancuso Scholarships, which cover the entire cost of tuition, fees, room and board for up to four years.

“It means the world to me to receive this scholarship,” says Sofa Wilson of Milford. “I have two younger sisters, and figuring out how to pay for college was super stressful for my parents and me.”

Wilson and Maddison Behringer of Ashburnham are the third pair of recipients of the Mancuso English, Humanities, and Social & Behavioral Sciences Scholarships. The two students will have the opportunity to take all four years at Framingham State at no cost, but must meet certain scholarship requirements in order to have it renewed each year.

“I’m the youngest of three, so I know for my parents this is a huge weight off their shoulders,” says Behringer.

English Professor Halcyon Mancuso created the scholarships through a $2.5 million financial commitment to FSU that was announced in 2018. There are two Mancuso Scholarships awarded at Framingham State every year. One will always be reserved for an English major, which is the subject Mancuso has taught for many years, and the second will rotate each year between majors in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Wilson was already considering Framingham State when she learned about the scholarship because she had heard about the strong reputation of the University’s English Department. Now she is looking forward to immersing herself in the college life by taking part in student clubs and intramural sports when she arrives on campus in the fall.

Behringer is majoring in Communications and considering a minor in journalism or television production.

“I’m very excited about the change from high school to college,” says Behringer. “I can’t wait to get on campus and take part in all the activities.”

Dr. Wardell Powell specializes in teaching science to marginalized communities

Dr. Wardell Powell received his PhD from the University of South Florida, Tampa. His research focuses on the use of socioscientific issues as a critical tool for enhancing scientific literacy among marginalized students in the K-12 system.

“Once you are able to tap into their lived experiences and then engage them in the science that creates interest,” Powell says.

Powell and his colleagues recently received an AmeriCorps planning grant focused on establishing strategies to get more candidates of color into the teaching workforce, which research demonstrates improves outcomes for students of color.

“‘The K-12 systems are becoming more and more diverse; however, it isn’t translating into the diversification of the teaching workforce,’” he says.
“Today, we are not just celebrating your graduation but also your transition from student to citizen.”
— CONGRESSWOMAN KATHERINE CLARK

FSU Celebrates Two Classes with Virtual Commencement and Ram Graduation Walk

Following an extremely difficult year in the lives of so many students, members of the Framingham State University community gathered virtually in May to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of the Class of 2020 and the Class of 2021.

Congresswoman Katherine Clark (D-MA-3) told the Class of 2021 that the challenges they have faced over the past year will further prepare them to take action in order to meet the trials that lie ahead.

“In the last year, you have marched and voted in record numbers,” said Clark. “You have also fueled the movement for Black Lives, spoken up to end transphobia and fought to stop Asian hate. Today, we are not just celebrating your graduation but also your transition from student to citizen.”

The University conferred upon Clark an honorary Doctor of Public Service degree during the ceremony. The President’s Medal, which is the highest honor awarded by the Office of the President at FSU, was presented to Professor Halsycon Mancuso of the English Department.

During the class of 2020 commencement, keynote speaker Lyndia Downie, President and Executive Director of the Pine Street Inn in Boston, told the students about the organization’s strategy of providing long-term housing to the chronically homeless, and how it has led to Boston having one of the lowest percentages of homeless people living on the street in the entire country. Downie was presented with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree during the ceremony.

In addition to faculty searches for the department, Dr. Pilkenton served on the search committee for the Dean of the College of STEM and on the search committee for the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Dr. Sarah Pilkenton is a professor of Chemistry and Food Science at Framingham State University. She holds a PhD in Chemistry from Purdue University.

Dr. Pilkenton’s dedication to service is demonstrated by her willingness to immediately throw herself into the breach when her students and colleagues are in need. During her time as Department Chair, the Chemistry and Food Science curriculum underwent major revisions, a new major was created and 21 new faculty were hired. As director of the department’s graduate program, she has been instrumental in establishing and growing a program that, until she took over, would have students only sporadically.

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Dr. Lina Rincón is a former professor of Sociology at Framingham State University and Assistant Director of the Center for Excellence in Learning, Teaching, Scholarship and Service (CELTSS). She holds a PhD in Sociology from the State University of New York.

Dr. Rincón is a passionate, energetic and dedicated teacher-scholar, mentor and leader at Framingham State University. She cares deeply about issues impacting FSU students, both in and outside the classroom, and her teaching is inspired by her research.

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Dr. Vincent Ferraro is a professor and Chair of the Framingham State University Sociology Department. He holds a PhD in Sociology from Northeastern University.

Dr. Ferraro has been a skilled academic advisor over his entire career at FSU. He is often requested by students when they enter the major, and prior to becoming Chair, he carried an overload of advisees. He was the University’s first Criminology faculty hire, and has worked hard to build it into one of the University’s most popular programs. While Dr. Ferraro has supported new faculty as they have joined the program, he has also seen to it that FSU is a hub for student opportunity around issues that interest them.

Dr. Ferraro’s tenure as Chair of the Sociology Department was virtually simultaneous with the onset of the pandemic. When the University switched to a remote format in spring 2020, he worked tirelessly to ensure that students got the support that they needed.

Dr. Jerusha Nelson-Peterson is an associate professor and Chair of the Framingham State University Department of Food and Nutrition. She holds a PhD in Food Policy and Applied Nutrition from Tufts University and is a Registered Dietitian. Dr. Nelson-Peterson’s scholarship is extensive and has focused on issues such as food insecurity and health outcomes among immigrant communities in Massachusetts. Her research often involves a team of both graduate and undergraduate students working by her side and benefiting from her knowledge and expertise. Dr. Nelson-Peterson has delivered dozens of presentations on her research, and has given invited testimony before the National Committee on Vital Statistics in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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When Adam Banat ‘22 enrolled at Framingham State University to study Business and Information Technology, he never could have imagined that by his junior year he would be captaining a varsity sports team and serving as president of a council that advocates on behalf of all student athletes.

“It’s been a great three years,” says Banat, a member of the FSU cross country team. “The team is just like family. We hang out all the time and are always supporting and encouraging each other.”

Banat is a longtime soccer player who first ran cross country his senior year of high school. He decided to join the FSU cross country team after being encouraged by head coach Scot VanderMolen.

“It was a great decision,” he says. “Right away, I made this huge group of friends which can be harder as a commuter student.”

Despite his late entry, it didn’t take long for Banat’s excellent leadership skills to shine through and by his junior year he was selected as a team captain. Banat was also elected by his peers as the president of the Student Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC), which advocates for issues important to athletes on campus. In that role, he also represents FSU athletes at conference-wide meetings.

“Leadership has always been something I’ve been comfortable with,” says Banat. “I love the camaraderie of sports and being part of a close-knit group.”

During his time with SAAC, the group has pushed for reserved weight room hours for varsity athletes only, a special graduation stole for four-year athletes and the establishment of a home course for cross country meets.

Banat is still considering what options to pursue after graduation. “I’m big into technology and business,” he says. “I just need to figure out how I want to use those skills.”

Major: Business and IT
Hometown: Shrewsbury, MA
Leadership: Cross Country Captain and President of the Student Athlete Advisory Council

A consortium of six colleges led by Framingham State University, as well as the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, has received a $441,367 grant from the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) aimed at increasing the number of college courses utilizing free Open Educational Resources (OER) rather than costly textbooks.

The project—Remixing Open Textbooks through an Equity Lens (ROTEL): Culturally Relevant Open Textbooks for High Enrollment General Education Courses and Career and Professional Courses at Six Public Massachusetts Colleges—will test the hypothesis that underrepresented students will achieve higher academic outcomes if free, culturally relevant course materials that reflect their experiences are utilized. Student savings on textbooks over the three-year grant period are projected to be over $800,000, and the goal is to create a new model that provides continued savings long into the future.

“We are excited about the project’s potential and outcomes for our students,” says Millie González, Interim Dean of Framingham State’s Whittemore Library and the Project Lead. “We will track performance measures, including numbers of courses, sections and faculty, using new OER materials, student grades and satisfaction in those courses.”

Colleges taking part in the effort, in addition to Framingham State, include Fitchburg State University, Holyoke Community College, Northern Essex Community College, Salem State University, and Springfield Technical Community College.

The project will provide monetary incentives for faculty to create free OER textbooks and adoptions of existing open textbooks using an equity and inclusion lens, which will result in significant student savings per year.
Athletics Makes a Strong Return in Spring 2021

Framingham State University student athletes made a long- awaited return to the athletic fields in spring 2021, after missing out on nearly three seasons of sports due to COVID-19.

The Women’s Softball team picked up right where it left off, finishing with a 29–8 record, including a perfect 10–0 mark in league play. The Rams were the 2021 MASCAC (Massachusetts State College Athletic Conference) Regular Season Champions, but suffered a heartbreaking defeat in game three of the MASCAC Championship Series against Bridgewater State. The team placed five players on the All-Conference team: Sophomore pitcher Ally Moran, senior third baseman Kirsten Dick and junior shortstop Camille Desrochers were selected to the first team, while sophomore pitcher Shannon Ward and sophomore outfielder Grace Swanson were voted to the second team.

In other highlights from the spring, first-year pitcher Scott Nosky was named Rookie of the Year for Men’s Baseball, and senior second baseman Bobby Higgins earned All-Conference honors. Finally, Women’s Track & Field enjoyed a solid season, setting several school records and finishing fifth in the MASCAC Championships. Junior Patrice Haney set school records in both the 100- and 200-meter dash events.

Women’s Lacrosse also enjoyed another strong season, going 8–2 overall and losing a 14–13 nail-biter to Westfield State in the MASCAC Championship game. First-year attack Hannah Guerin, senior midfielder Hanna McMahon and junior attack Tara Palermo were selected to the All-MASCAC team.

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FSU Launching Membership Club at the Warren Conference Center

Framingham State is excited to announce the upcoming launch of the University Community Club at the Warren Conference Center, which will provide access to social, cultural, recreational and educational opportunities to FSU alumni and local residents.

Located in Ashland, MA, the Warren Conference Center & Inn sits on over 100 wooded lakefront acres, with access to hiking trails, tennis courts, athletic fields and more. The University Community Club will fully launch in April 2022, with a family rate of just $125 annually.

“The Warren Conference Center and surrounding property is a wonderful resource, and we are thrilled to be able to provide this opportunity to open it up to members of the FSU community, as well as local residents,” says FSU President F. Javier Cevallos. “This is a unique opportunity to be part of a social and recreational club at a fraction of the cost you would pay elsewhere. We hope people will take advantage.”

Members of the Club will have access to:
- Free parking and maintained public hiking trails
- Ashland State Park
- Watercraft rentals
- Tennis and pickleball courts
- Nine-hole disc golf course
- Fitness and wellness classes
- Social events, such as wine tastings, dining clubs, poker nights and more

Certain activities and benefits will be covered under the membership fee, while others will have costs associated with them.

To learn more, visit FRAMINGHAM.EDU/ABOUT-FSU/UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY-CLUB
For more than a decade, as the cost of higher education has risen, a false narrative has taken root across the country that humanities subjects—such as English, history and art history, studio arts, communications and world languages—have poor job prospects. That narrative, coupled with job loss during the Great Recession, resulted in a dramatic reduction in humanities majors, even while study after study demonstrates that employers are looking for the very skills that these subjects provide, including written and verbal communication, creative problem solving, critical thinking and multicultural understanding.

Longtime FSU English Professor Halcyon Mancuso wants to close this gap between perception and reality when it comes to the humanities. “Employers tell us that there is a comprehensive set of essential skills and perspectives that will always be in demand, no matter how the job or career landscape changes in the 21st century,” says Mancuso, who is the benefactor and scholar mentor behind the Mancuso English, Humanities, and Social & Behavioral Sciences Scholarships (see page six). “Those skills and perspectives are what a humanities degree is all about.”

Last spring, thanks to the vision and financial support of Mancuso, the University launched the Mancuso Humanities Workforce Preparation Center (MHWPC)—a new resource to promote the benefits of a humanities education and help students launch successful careers. The center is funded through an annual $40,000 donation from Mancuso, the executive director, and serves three constituencies: current and prospective humanities students and their families; FSU humanities faculty; and regional employers. Mancuso is committed to contributing up to $60,000 annually in support of the effort.

Already, the center has launched a comprehensive website with important information and resources, assigned its first and second faculty fellows, hired a part-time website and social media manager, launched a summer humanities faculty professional development initiative and provided meaningful paid internships to multiple students. In addition to hiring its own student interns, the center sponsors a flexible humanities internship funding program that offers micro-, mini- and course-credit internship funding to address the internship needs of FSU humanities students.

“Not every student has the life circumstances that allow them to participate in a departmental course-credit internship, so our program helps humanities students get important paid professional experiences in other ways,” explains Mancuso.

“Halcyon’s passion for supporting humanities students is unparalleled,” says Framingham State President F. Javier Cevallos. “I believe the Mancuso Center is going to have a major impact in demonstrating to students and employers the value of a humanities education. It truly is a unique resource you won’t find at most other colleges.”
It’s difficult to fathom everything that Framingham State Marketing Major Tania Evora has overcome to get to where she is today. A decade ago, she was a homeless, undocumented, single mother with limited English skills, who was trying to recover from an abusive relationship.

Through hard work, an endless supply of energy and an outgoing personality, Evora has completely turned her life around and is on the brink of earning her bachelor’s degree.

“I’ve seen so much progress and gotten help from some really good people,” she says.

When she was homeless, the organization Second Step provided Evora and her three children with housing and connected her to other organizations to set her up with English as a Second Language classes and a work visa. She would go on to earn her GED, get a green card and then apply to college.

Evora earned her associate’s degree in liberal arts and communications from MassBay Community College prior to transferring to Framingham State to complete her bachelor’s degree.

“I really enjoy marketing,” says Evora, who became a U.S. citizen in May. “I like to talk to people, and I like advertising and social media, so it’s a good fit.”

Evora works two jobs, while raising her three children. A native of Cape Verde, she speaks four languages and was chosen as one of three recipients of the Miss Massachusetts for America honor in 2020. In addition, she takes karate, helps teach others about self-defense and does everything she can to support fellow survivors of domestic violence.

As a part-time fashion model, Evora and her friends organize Beauty Queen days that provide survivors a day of beauty with professional makeup, jewelry, designer clothes and a professional photoshoot.

“I want to inspire them, because I went through so much and had nothing,” Evora says. “But there are people and groups out there who can help you.”
"We view research as part of our teaching in some ways...undergraduate students work directly and very closely with faculty."

Margaret Carroll, PhD
Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

Completing the Puzzle with Research

Story: Kristen Paulson-Nguyen
Photography: Kent Dayton

The air is alive with the calls of songbirds at dawn in the Douglas State Forest in central Massachusetts.

"It’s magical," says Rowan Coltey-Reeves ‘21, who is there to attach coded silver bands to songbirds’ legs. She’ll collect data about thrushes, black and white warblers, woodpeckers and other species as part of Professor of Biology Brandi Van Roo’s research, which contributes to national efforts to monitor bird populations.

“We view research as part of our teaching in some ways," says Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Margaret Carroll."At large research universities, mostly graduate students work with faculty, but here undergraduate students work directly and very closely with faculty."
Van Roo and other faculty researchers engage regularly with students’ stirring questions.

The activity also enriches teaching and mentoring. “The number and diversity of projects that I’ve participated in with students over 20 years has been amazing,” says Van Roo. In STEM, 80 percent of tenure-line faculty report having an ongoing research program, and 73 percent of those report involving undergraduates in their research.

Van Roo and her students use the bands to survey and monitor bird populations over time, called conservation biology, and to carry out research targeted to specific academic research questions.

Migrating bird surveys are incorporated into spring and fall class activities. Summer breeding birds, though, are monitored weekly, and the data is sent to MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivability), a national database that aids conservation efforts.

Van Roo has helped Coltey-Reeves research bacterial microbiome (bacterial load) in North American songbirds and the songbird behavioral response to chemical stimuli that alert them to the presence of predators. Van Roo guided

the students’ hypotheses, data collection and analysis for both studies. “Brandi has not only provided academic support but has also opened up opportunities,” says Coltey-Reeves. She banded birds with state ornithologist Andrew Vitz, who is studying the community of birds that occupy early forest growth. Coltey-Reeves hopes to find a job in which she can expand her banding work.

As the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the nation, scores of restaurants closed. John Umit Palabiyik, Assistant Professor of Management and Business and Information Technology, wondered what owners could do to stay open during the worst economic downturn in a century. He convened a group of industry professionals and academics that included Suzanne Markham Bagnera, Clinical Assistant Professor in the School of Hospitality Administration at Boston University, and Brendan Cronin, Operations Manager and Associate Professor in the School of Hospitality Management at Endicott College. The group, through their survey Reseting the Table in Massachusetts, sought to find out how customers, operators (managers or owners) and employees may change their behavior in the post-pandemic market.

Palabiyik, the Program Coordinator of Hospitality and Tourism Management, joined Framingham State University in 2018. With Shiang-Lih Chen McCaig, Assistant Professor of Business at Colorado Mesa University, and Widener University Professor Jeffrey C. Lolli, Palabiyik is also working on Casino Corporate Social Responsibility during the pandemic, a project to predict whether or not the social activity programs of U.S. casino businesses will increase.

His international research project with Ruth Sabina Francis, Program Director and Lecturer at the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Events, at Taylor’s University, and her colleague, Senior Lecturer Gopinath Sangaran, seeks to answer how professors handle hospitality education within the restrictions on face-to-face contact.

Assistant Professor of Psychology Michael Greenstein’s Memory, Affect, Decision-making (MAD) lab examines how emotions affect memory and decision-making. In one project, Greenstein, who has worked at Framingham State University since 2015, is exploring how retractions like saying something is “fake news” affect memory. His preliminary data suggests that saying something’s fake news doesn’t lead to a person correcting their memory.

He’s also looking at how positive emotional stimuli influence memory using a clip from Game of Thrones. Greenstein has reason to believe that seeing an emotional visual stimulus might lead people to focus better on a scene and remember auditory stimuli.

Greenstein has had at least two students as full-time research assistants every semester since 2016. They learn how to run complicated experimental protocols, set up and run human participants through studies, and analyze data. “To both being a chance to explore new unanswered questions and to work with students to help them learn how to engage and ask these questions is fun,” says Greenstein.

Kimberly Ardite Hall, who joined the faculty in 2019, is most interested in how people tolerate and regulate emotions and stress. An Assistant Professor of Psychology and Philosophy, she is also the director of the Research in Cognition, Emotion and Psychopathology (RECAP) laboratory on campus. Ardite Hall first became interested in this area of study as a post-baccalaureate research assistant at Boston Veterans Hospital, working with veterans

80% TENURE-LINE STEM FACULTY WHO HAVE AN ONGOING RESEARCH PROGRAM.
Failure Is Part of the Process

Food Science major Morgan Failla ’21, who is enrolled in the 4 + 1 Program in Food and Nutrition, is evaluating the effects of plant extracts on “good” microbes (probiotics) in the small intestine. “I fail every single day and get to learn from my failures,” she says.

Failla is working on her two year thesis project: testing the prebiotic potential and protective effect of cranberry, green tea, cocoa and witch hazel on probiotic bacteria to see if the plant substances affect its growth and death rate. “I like that if I have a question in the lab, I can test what I’m wondering about,” she says.

Failla would like to work in product development, creating products for consumers that offer unique health benefits. She’d especially like to find a way that she feels is looking at a quick and nutritious breakfast. Failla envisions creating a supplement or bar that satisfies people’s nutritional needs and keeps them feeling full, but takes less than a half-hour to prepare.

Research is of extreme importance for teaching purposes and helps graduates grow faster once employed,” says Emmanouil Apostolidis, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Food Science. Over the past decade, he has explored a wide variety of natural products to prevent Type 2 diabetes. He has studied how they are metabolized and can affect gut microorganisms and how (through a USDA-funded project) they can have antimicrobial effects on the dairy industry.

Apostolidis is working on four non-funded projects with seven students: evaluating the effect of mulberry leaves and tart versus sweet cherries for the management of glucose levels; how oregano, rosemary and salvia extracts can have cognitive effects and manage inflammation; the effects of olive oil byproducts on managing glucose levels; and—in collaboration with Steven Cok, Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Food Science—how olive oil byproducts inhibit the breakdown of hyaluronic acid.

As he does with all his students, Apostolidis trained Morgan Failla ’21 for two months, working closely with her in the lab. During weekly meetings, they reviewed results and made adjustments. “We know that thousands of natural products have certain health benefits, but we don’t know why,” says Apostolidis. His supply of questions, it appears, never runs out.

Research is of extreme importance for teaching purposes and helps graduates grow faster once employed,” says Emmanouil Apostolidis, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Food Science.

Women veterans are a small but rapidly growing population that is expected to continue to grow in size and percentage of active-duty military. Arditte Hall has focused on the cognitive factors and gender differences women experience.

In the fall, an undergraduate research assistant will join her to look at variables, learn to form research questions and create an independent research project. “I’m confident that they can have a rich research experience,” says Arditte Hall.

“Research is of extreme importance for teaching purposes and helps graduates grow faster once employed,” says Emmanouil Apostolidis, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Food Science. Over the past decade, he has explored a wide variety of natural products to prevent Type 2 diabetes. He has studied how they are metabolized and can affect gut microorganisms and how (through a USDA-funded project) they can have antimicrobial effects on the dairy industry.

Apostolidis is working on four non-funded projects with seven students: evaluating the effect of mulberry leaves and tart versus sweet cherries for the management of glucose levels; how oregano, rosemary and salvia extracts can have cognitive effects and manage inflammation; the effects of olive oil byproducts on managing glucose levels; and—in collaboration with Steven Cok, Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Food Science—how olive oil byproducts inhibit the breakdown of hyaluronic acid.

As he does with all his students, Apostolidis trained Morgan Failla ’21 for two months, working closely with her in the lab. During weekly meetings, they reviewed results and made adjustments. “We know that thousands of natural products have certain health benefits, but we don’t know why,” says Apostolidis. His supply of questions, it appears, never runs out.
Making an impact

ALUMNI PROFILE

Winnie Akoury '15

After graduating from Framingham State with a degree in Corporate Communication in 2015, Winnie Akoury never imagined that in just a few short years she’d be a producer with one of the top rated radio shows in the Boston market. “Sometimes it feels surreal,” Akoury says of her role with the iconic Matty in the Morning show on Kiss 108, hosted by radio legend Matt Siegel. “I grew up in Quincy listening to everyone on that show. Now they are my colleagues and friends.”

An internship in the Marketing Department at iHeartRadio during her senior year at FSU helped Akoury break into the radio business. She would go on to run social media for three of the radio company’s music stations before leaving to take a job with the New England Patriots as a production assistant for the team’s in house production team.

Akoury maintained a good relationship with the team at iHeartRadio and returned to Kiss 108 to do off air activities such as phone screening, social media and producing. She was just recently promoted to an on air producer for the Matty in the Morning show.

“Everything has really fallen into place,” says Akoury. “I’ve been exposed to multiple levels of the radio industry, from producing to running the backstage of events.”

Akoury even cohosts her own podcast, This Might Get Awkward, on the iHeart Podcast Network. “I definitely see myself in media long term,” she says. “Radio is so unpredictable, but I feel like I’ve set myself up to be able to transition to a number of different career tracks.”

ALUMNI PROFILE

Mark Sorenson ’81

Drawing on his successful career as a computer scientist and executive, Mark Sorenson ’81 recently wrote and published his debut novel, A Restaurant in Jaffa, a cyber thriller that follows two protagonists as they battle hackers and revolutionaries who have infected essential computers in the United States. The novel, which has been greeted with very positive early reviews, took Sorenson about five years to write following his retirement as a senior vice president at EMC Corporation. Sorenson had no writing experience beyond PowerPoint presentations and emails, but he has been an avid reader throughout his life. His work took him around the world managing computer teams as large as 1,500 people, including within Israel, which is one of the key settings for the novel.

“They say, ‘Write what you know,’” Sorenson says. “I’ve watched and participated in the evolution of the computer industry for over 30 years, and I’ve also been able to learn a lot about the history, culture and conflicts of the Middle East due to my travels there.”

Sorenson graduated from Framingham State with a degree in Psychology, but recognized that the computer industry was exploding in the early 1980s and transitioned his career focus. He credits his Psychology degree for equipping him with the skills needed to manage large groups of people.

To learn more about A Restaurant in Jaffa, or to purchase a copy, visit MARKESORENSON.COM

ALUMNI PROFILE

Kevin Anderson ’01

Kevin Anderson ’01 has held positions across the full spectrum of college athletics, from Division III to the Ivy League to the Division I powerhouse Pacific 12 (Pac 12) Conference. But it wasn’t until last year that Anderson found his true calling as the athletic director at Grafton High School.

“One of the things that pushed me away from big time college athletics is that I was not connected to the kids,” says Anderson. “Being able to play a role in the experience of students and having a positive impact on them is exciting for me. It’s what I’ve always wanted to do.”

Anderson has long held a passion for athletics, and was able to break into the profession during his junior year of Framingham State University by volunteering with the NBA Summer League. That led to an internship with the Celtics his senior year that kick-started his career.

In 2005, he moved out west to work for the Pac 12, which not only led to some amazing experiences, but also solidified his desire to work more closely with students. He moved back east and held sports information and assistant athletic director positions at Stonehill College, Clark University and Dean College prior to landing the job as athletic director with Grafton High School last year.

“It’s been a long journey, but last summer it finally happened for me,” says Anderson. “This is where I want to be.”

He credits FSU Athletic Director Tom Kelley ’76 and Deputy Director Carey Egan with mentoring him throughout his career.

“In any career, you always have people who help you along the way,” he says. “These are my people. I wouldn’t be who I am without their guidance.”

ALUMNI PROFILE

Kevin Anderson ’01

Settles into Dream Role at Grafton High School

Winnie Akoury ’15—Producer at Iconic Matty in the Morning Show

“I grew up in Quincy listening to everyone on that show. Now they are my colleagues and friends.”

WINNIE AKOURY ’15

ALUMNI PROFILE

Mark Sorenson ’81

Publishes Cyber Thriller A Restaurant in Jaffa

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1970s

Keith Gueney ’76 retired after a 40-year career in Sales and Sales Management with Data General, Cahners Publishing, Motorola and Comcast. He is the author of four popular books.

Jim White ’78,拮据’s Public Health Director, who worked in the same department for 45 years, retired at the end of September.

1980s

Celia Jeffries ’82 novel Blue Desert is now available. It tells the story of Alice George, a headstrong young British woman and her life among the Tuareg, a tribe of nomadic warriors during World War I.

Jean (O’Connell) Wright ’89 welcomed Greg Landry ’93 as the next Town Manager.

Jim White ’78,拮据’s Public Health Director, who worked in the same department for 45 years, retired at the end of September.

2000s

Jennifer Evans ’01 was recently appointed as Principal of the Martin Elementary School in North Attleborough.

Jennifer Navaroli ’01 MPH, RD, LDN, has joined Action-based Middlesex Digestive Health & Endoscopy Center.

Lindsey Boyers ’09 has published 14 books, and her bylines appear on CNET, mindbodygreen, Healthline, The Suprise, The Suprise Bites, Vorrey Health and Livestrong, among others.

Kia Minor ’13 joined the Bullfinch Group as a Financial Representative, having previously served as the Assistant Women’s Basketball Coach at Babson College.

Caitlin Donahue ’14 recently joined Saxony as a Strategic Account Specialist.

Ricky Galian Hall ’14 accepted a full-time position with MixSoft as an Enterprise Financial Services Account Executive.

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1990s

Kenneth Brooks ’90 was recently named the Head of Marketing for TailoredMed Hospital & Health Care in New York City.

Daniel Dowd’s ’90 home was recently featured in an issue of The Maine House, which aims to capture the state’s singular character through the unique homes of its residents.

Christopher MacDonald-Dennis ’92 returned to the Bay State in February 2018 to accept the role of Chief Diversity Officer at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.

Freedom Credit Union recently welcomed Greg Landry ’93 as a Mortgage Loan Originator in its West Springfield branch. The Selectboard of Farmington, Indiana, unanimously chose Christopher Walker ’93 as the next Town Manager.

2010s

Almea Alban ’10 recently started a new position as Care Coordinator (Case Manager) at Albero Pharma, Inc.

Amanda Maguire ’10, who joined the U.S. Army full-time in 2019, was recently promoted to First Lieutenant.

George Schreiner ’10 opened his own Wings Over franchise in Valley Stream, New York.

Kristina Malloy ’11 became the Headwear Developer for Fanatics, Inc., a market leader for licensed sports merchandise.

Karen Cuhil ’12 was named Principal of Milton High School in Milton, Massachusetts, last March after holding the interim principal role.

Barbara Hebert ’12 is the 2021 President of the Hampden County Young Professionals. Barbara has worked in the Pioneer Valley since graduating from Framingham State in 2012.

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2021 Alumni Achievement Awards

Recognizing alumni for their outstanding accomplishments

HONORARY ALUMNA AWARD
Marcie Mills ’84
Marcie Mills has enjoyed a successful career in the radio industry, which includes time as director of national sales for Clear Channel. Her career has spanned four cities on both coasts. She left traditional radio in 2009 to launch Pandora’s audio sales division in the western United States, bringing for the very first time and helping to make the company one of the most widely utilized audio platforms in the world. Despite the very first time and helping to make the company one of the most widely utilized audio platforms in the world. Despite the

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Arlene Handschuch served as a faculty member in the FSU Fashion Design and Retailing Department for more than 35 years. A beloved member of the University community, she was recognized for the excellence of her teaching and her commitment to student success. Upon her retirement, she made a generous gift to the University to establish the Arlene Handschuch Endowed Fund for Fashion Design and Retailing.

Alumni Educator Award
Andrew Keough G’94
Dr. Andrew Keough has been an educator for nearly 30 years, starting as a special needs educator and high school teacher before moving on to leadership roles at several Massachusetts high schools. Today, he is the superintendent at Dover-Sharborn School District, where he leads one of the nation’s top-performing school systems. Dover-Sharborn sports a 99.4 percent graduation rate and a #1 ranking of Best Public High Schools in Boston.

Leadership and Service Award
Steve Devine ’84
After graduating from Framingham State with a degree in Economics, Steve Devine began a 33-year career at Bose Corporation, where he took on leadership roles in finance, business operations and global procurement. Outside of his business career, Devine dedicated himself to service, particularly at his alma mater. He served on FSU’s College of Business Advisory Board and launched a volunteer-driven Business Coaching Program for undergraduate business students.

Young Alumni Achievement Award
Travis Landry ’19
After graduating from Framingham State with a degree in Art History, Travis Landry quickly landed a job as the director of pop culture at Bruneau and Co. Landry is known to fans of PBS’s popular Antiques Roadshow, where he debuted as the youngest appraiser at 22 years of age. He is also part of the Justuff League podcast, is a frequent panelist at comic conventions and has been a recurring cast member on Travel Channel’s Toy Hunter.

HUMOROUS AWARD

Brandon Hendrix G’15

The last three years have been a whirlwind for FSU alum Brandon Hendrix G’15, who has gone from joining a startup company composed of a few people working in a tiny office behind a Dunkin Donuts to leading a marketing team of 170 people for the fastest profitable U.S. company to ever reach a $1 billion valuation, giving it “Unicorn” status in startup lingo.

His journey to Thrasio, one of the fastest-growing acquirers of Amazon third-party brands, started while he was holding an impressive early career job as an accountant at defense contractor Raytheon. For many people recently out of college, this would be an ideal spot to grow a long and successful career, but Hendrix did not find the work interesting. So he began teaching himself how to build websites, left Raytheon and dove into the exciting and challenging world of startups.

“Startups are just so much fun,” he says. “It’s like going through an MBA program every single time you do it.”

Over the next seven years, he would work in executive positions at several interesting startup companies, including Lovepop, which was featured on the hit show Shark Tank in 2015 and earned investment from Kevin “Mr. Wonderful” O’Leary. Things were working out great for Hendrix in 2018. He was happily married to his high school sweetheart and fellow FSU alum Payson (Glada) Hendrix ’09, G’14, a middle school teacher and children’s author. He was on paternity leave from Lovepop after having his second child when he was approached about joining a brand-new startup called Thrasio, whose concept was to raise money to start purchasing independent Amazon businesses.

There are 30,000 brands on Amazon with over $1 million in annual sales, according to Hendrix. Many of the people running them are stretched thin, struggling to scale up and looking for a way to scale up and looking for a way out while making a nice profit. Thrasio provides these people with exactly what they want by quickly purchasing their business within 30 to 45 days. Most sellers are thrilled to walk away with a couple million dollars, and Thrasio can use its vast resources—it currently has $2 billion in funding—to invest in and scale up the company it has purchased.

Hendrix, who is Senior Vice President of Marketing, was the fourth person to come onboard with Thrasio in 2018. Today, the company has more than 1,000 employees and continues to grow. It has also begun launching its own brands, in addition to buying out other Amazon companies every week. “It still doesn’t feel very real,” says Hendrix. “It’s such an amazing place to work. Everyone is super humble and fun. We’re trying to build the consumer company for the next generation.”
Celebrating Reunion!

In one of the first events held in person on campus since the start of the pandemic, Framingham State University welcomed back alumni June 4th and 5th for a joyous reunion celebration. “Following a year of nonstop meetings and events held over Zoom, I cannot begin to tell you how happy I am to be able to see you all in person!” President F. Javier Cevallos said during dinner with members of the Golden Anniversary Class of 1971.

Because COVID-19 forced the cancellation of all in-person events during Reunion 2020, Framingham State University took the opportunity to hold special anniversary dinners for the Classes of 1970 and 1971, and celebrated Alumni Achievement Award winners from 2020 and 2021.

“It certainly has been a challenging year for this University, but one we were able to overcome,” said Cevallos. “It’s wonderful to see all of you for this special celebration.”

Framingham State University’s Danforth Art School is flourishing in its fourth year located at the historic Jonathan Maynard Building on the town center common, a five-minute walk from campus.

Students enjoy learning in beautiful studios with lots of natural light and visiting the Danforth Art Museum exhibitions on the second floor. As they have for over 45 years, the Danforth Art School provides year-round fine arts classes to all ages in a variety of platforms and media. Their instructors are exceptional, for both their artistic expertise and their commitment to the highest-quality instruction for students of all ages.

Some recent highlights of innovative programs at the art school include “Drinks at the Danforth,” an evening Zoom workshop inspired by artwork from the museum, complete with home-delivered art supplies. For children, “Kids’ Night Out” features a Friday night of artmaking, a scavenger hunt in the museum, pizza, games, and treats. Middle and high school students can participate in a Fashion Design program, developed as a way to provide a link to the Fashion Design and Retailing Department at the University. Led by Program Coordinator Catherine Byrne, and with the help of faculty at the University, Danforth has welcomed dozens of students over the last two years as one of the only high-quality fashion design programs in the region.

The art school collaborates with various departments on campus and within the Framingham community to serve as an important resource for art.

For more information about the Danforth Art School, please contact Director Noelle Fournier

nFOURNIER1@FRAMINGHAM.EDU

Upcoming workshops and classes for all ages and levels can be found on the website:

DANFORTH.FRAMINGHAM.EDU
New Scholarship Honors Beloved Sociology Professor Priscilla Galvin ’97

A new scholarship at Framingham State University honors the memory of Priscilla Galvin ’97 who, following a successful career in business administration, returned to school later in life and fulfilled her dream of becoming a teacher.

“Teaching was the most important thing in Priscilla’s life, and she just loved the kids,” says her husband Robert Galvin, who established the scholarship following her passing last year. “I thought this was a good way to remember and honor her at the University.”

Robert Galvin owned and operated a successful company called Food Dynamics, which handled the sales of food to everything but supermarkets, such as Tyson, General Mills, McCormick, and others. “We basically brokered their sales to everything but supermarkets,” Galvin says, “so hospitals, colleges and other large businesses. Priscilla was a major contributor to the company and basically my right-hand person.”

When Robert Galvin sold the company, Priscilla decided to pursue her passion for teaching and enrolled at Framingham State, where she graduated in 1997 at the head of her class. She eventually earned a full scholarship to Boston College’s graduate program and began teaching Sociology part-time at FSU.

Framingham State Dean of Education & Social and Behavioral Science Susan Dargan, who taught Priscilla Galvin as a student and later became her close friend and colleague, marveled at her ability to connect with traditional undergraduate students despite being much older.

“Students loved her. She was always rooting for them to succeed.”

Robert Galvin believes the new scholarship honors her passion for helping students. “She spent an enormous amount of time with these kids,” he says. “You would really have a hard time finding someone more dedicated to their students than she was.”

The Priscilla Galvin ’97 Sociology Scholarship is reserved for Sociology majors with significant demonstrated financial need. To learn more, e-mail ALUMNI@FRAMINGHAM.EDU

Events

November 3, 2021
Swiacki Children’s Literature Festival
Our annual celebration of Children’s Literature features author Javaka Steptoe, artist Sophie Blackall and special guest author Kate DiCamillo.

December 3, 2021
Holiday Party at the Museum of Science, Boston
Join us for a special holiday party at Boston’s wonderful Museum of Science! You won’t want to miss this festive opportunity.

June 3 – 6, 2022
Alumni Weekend and Reunion, Campus
It’s never too early to start making plans for our biggest alumni celebration of the year. This is the best weekend of the year to reconnect with old friends and your alma mater. We hope you can join us!

This is just a sample of the events and activities available to alumni! Get the latest information at ALUMNI@FRAMINGHAM.EDU

Back at it:

Following a season lost to COVID-19, volleyball players Hailey Sanders ‘24 (left) and Sarah Sullivan ‘24 practice their digging and setting outside on Crocker Grove.
FSU FLASHBACK
A peek at a Household Arts Class in 1960.
(Courtesy Framingham State Archives)